



One Hundred Fifteenth Congress  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Committee on Foreign Affairs  
2170 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515  
[www.foreignaffairs.house.gov](http://www.foreignaffairs.house.gov)

January 17, 2018

The President  
The White House  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

As you finalize the Fiscal Year 2019 budget, we urge you to fund the international affairs account at the FY 2017 level of \$59.1 billion. While the final FY 2018 spending bills have not yet been signed into law, Members of Congress on both sides of the aisle have rejected the draconian and very dangerous 32 percent cut to the international affairs budget that you proposed. Now more than ever, the United States must make smart investments in diplomacy and development.

Retired generals and diplomats, Fortune 500 CEOs and faith leaders all agree that the Administration's proposed cuts to the FY 2018 international affairs budget would have a devastating impact on our global leadership and make the American people less safe. These cuts are a gift to countries like Russia and China who are already filling the void left by America's diminishing role in the world. That is why both the Senate and the House of Representatives chose to disregard them.

This sentiment is shared by both Republicans and Democrats. In an op-ed last year, former Republican Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist asked you to "reconsider these severe cuts to the international affairs budget – from moral, national security and economic perspectives – to preserve the current level of funding that saves the lives of millions." And former Secretary of State General Colin Powell wrote that your FY 2018 budget "signals an American retreat, leaving a vacuum that would make us far less safe and prosperous. While it may sound penny-wise, it is pound-foolish."

Last year, 120 retired three- and four-star generals sent a letter to House and Senate leadership emphasizing the need "to ensure that resources for the International Affairs Budget keep pace with the growing global threats and opportunities we face," noting that "now is not the time to retreat." We could not agree more.

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By slashing our investments in diplomacy and development, the Administration is making it more likely that we will have to rely on our military, thus putting our brave servicemembers at risk and dramatically increasing the costs for American taxpayers. That is extremely unwise and dangerous.

For the sake of our national security, we urge you to heed the advice of civilian and military leaders alike, Republicans and Democrats and the majority of Americans in proposing a robust FY 2019 international affairs budget at the FY 2017 level of \$59.1 billion.

Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter.

Sincerely,



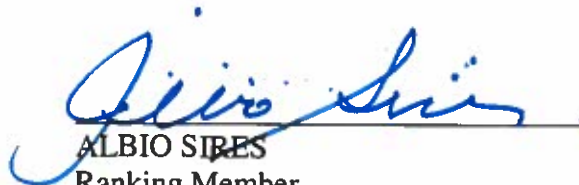
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House Foreign Affairs Committee



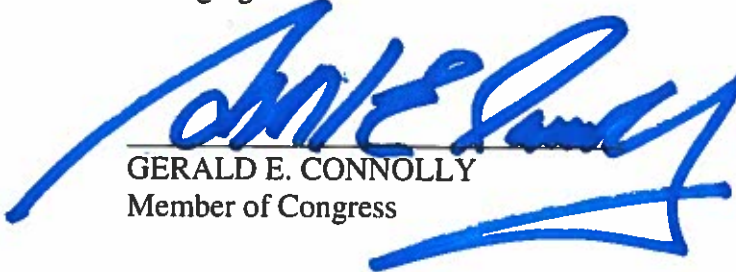
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Member of Congress



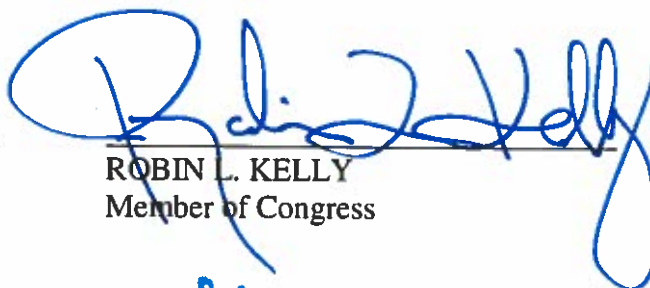
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Member of Congress